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ABSTRACT

Planning is essential if future events are to be controlled and desired change brought about. Decision making, like planning, must be based on facts. A direct relationship exists between good decision making and the use of factual information. One of the most crucial areas where information is lacking concerns the opinions of local citizens. This bulletin determines priorities based on North Carolinians' perceptions of problems in their communities. Different community types are defined by size, density, and characteristics of the people. Information was gathered through a Statewide survey conducted during April and May 1973. Questionnaires were mailed to 4,470 household heads; 3,115 were returned for a 70 percent response rate. The 39 items identified were grouped through factor analysis into 13 common areas of concern. Results showed that North Carolinians see the cost of living; the use of illegal drugs; and the availability of recreational and entertainment facilities, medical facilities, and transportation as major problems in their communities. The use of illegal drugs, pollution, race relations, and transportation were considered more serious in urban areas; medical facilities, recreation, employment opportunities, and industrial development were more serious in rural areas. (NQ)

THROUGH OUR EYES

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volume 5:
rural-urban problems in north carolina

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HIGHLIGHTS

The people in North Carolina see the cost of living and the use of illegal drugs as major problems in their communities. Other major problems include the availability of recreational and entertainment facilities, medical facilities, and transportation.

Problems which were considered more serious in urban areas include: use of illegal drugs, pollution, race relations, and transportation.

Problems which were considered more serious in rural areas include: medical facilities, recreation, employment opportunities, and industrial development.

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Planning is essential if one wishes to control future events and bring about desired change. Change will occur. The question is will it be planned change based upon facts or occur by chance. Whether one accepts, fights, plans for, or directs change it is a cost for society. The cost of change can be viewed from two broad areas, economic and social. From the economic viewpoint the establishment of a new shopping mall necessitates the expansion and change of streets and roads. A social cost can occur when a school system is allowed to deteriorate prohibiting children from attaining the best possible education. Pollution may be viewed from both aspects; a cost in natural resources and a health hazard to local residents.

Decision making, like planning, must be based upon facts. There is a direct relationship between good decision-making and the use of factual information. In the past, too many decisions at the local community level have been made based on inadequate information. One of the most crucial areas in which information is lacking concerns the opinions of local citizens. Often local leaders have not made a sincere effort to determine the needs and desires of the people.

Today more autonomy is being given to both rural and urban leaders, decision-makers, and planners for directing the future of their communities. This is partly the result of new monies being channeled into communities through revenue sharing, model cities programs, and urban renewal. Community leaders are expected to judiciously allocate these funds and other available monies to meet the needs of the people. The fact that the demands for services and facilities is constantly growing combined with the fact

that monies seem never to satisfy public demands, raises the question as to the priorities of needs. How are local leaders going to allocate the funds? What services and facilities are to be provided? In short, how will local leaders determine the allocation of resources to meet the multitude of demands from the public.

This bulletin discusses the determination of priorities based upon peoples perception of problems in their communities. The information can be used as background material for raising questions, stimulating thought, and leading to a more precise definition of what are the problems in both rural and urban communities across North Carolina. Specific communities are not identified. However, different kinds of communities are defined according to size, density, and according to characteristics of people within communities. This classification of community allows leaders to select certain data found in this study and apply it to any given community.

The information for this study was gathered through a Statewide survey conducted during April and May, 1973. Mail questionnaires were delivered to 4,470 potential respondents and 3,115 heads of households returned them for a 70 percent response rate. Complete information concerning sampling and data gathering procedures is available elsewhere.[1]

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[1]Additional information concerning sampling procedure, data collection, and comparisons with Statewide data can be obtained from Through Our Eyes: Volume 1 "Peoples Goals and Needs in North Carolina" which also contains information for the 17 Multi-County Planning Regions; and Through Our Eyes: Volume 2, a summary of Volume 1; and Through Our Eyes Volume 3, "Who Wants What in North Carolina,". These manuscripts can be obtained from the Agricultural Extension Service, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina.

STATEWIDE COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

In order that community residents might assess a broad range of community problems, 39 items were identified. These items were then grouped (through factor analysis) into 13 common areas of concern (see Table 1, pages 6 and 7). Naturally, these items in no way exhaust the list of problems facing communities, but they do provide documented public input on a wide variety of issues.

The people seem to feel that problems concerned with Recreation, Health, Transportation, and Social Services were the most serious in communities across the State. For example, over one-half of the respondents considered the three items focusing on recreation as a moderate or serious problem in their community. Items included under Health, Transportation, and Social Services followed closely behind recreation. Of the 11 items included in these four areas, from 44 to 63 percent of the respondents considered these a moderate or serious problem in their community.

Items focusing on Social Control, Education, Pollution, Citizen Involvement, Employment, and Community Services, were considered less serious. Some of the items within the community dimensions varied considerably. "Use of illegal drugs" and "availability of special education of the retarded and handicapped" were of particular concern. Except for these two items, over one-half of the respondents considered the items listed under these 6 community dimensions not a community problem or only a slight community problem. Very few citizens felt that Cultural Services or Church and Youth Services were much of a community problem.

Table 1: Community problems in North Carolina (N=3115, response rate = 70 percent).

Community Dimension items	Not a problem or slight problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem	Mean Rank
RECREATION				
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those over 60.....	37%	29%	34%	3
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those 21 to 60.....	43	31	26	5
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those under 21.....	46	27	26	7
HEALTH				
Adequacy of medical facilities and staff.....	43	29	28	4
Mental health services.....	53	31	17	12
TRANSPORTATION				
Condition of streets and roads.....	49	35	16	9
Adequacy of transportation system.....	54	27	19	11
SOCIAL SERVICES				
Assistance to the old.....	44	36	20	6
Availability of youth counseling services.....	52	30	17	10
Assistance to the poor.....	56	30	14	13
Availability of child care centers....	56	27	17	16
SOCIAL CONTROLS				
Use of illegal drugs.....	37	34	30	2
Adequacy of law enforcement.....	58	31	11	22
Race relations in community.....	65	27	8	28
Protection of individual freedom and privacy.....	69	20	10	36
EDUCATION				
Availability of special education for retarded and handicapped.....	45	33	22	8
Adequacy of elementary and high schools.....	54	33	13	21
Availability of kindergarten program.....	60	25	16	25
Availability of vocational training in high schools.....	63	28	9	30
Adult education program.....	65	26	9	34

Table 1: (continued)

Community Dimension items	Not a problem or slight problem	Moderate problem	Serious problem	Mean Rank
POLLUTION				
Water pollution	57%	31%	12%	14
Air pollution	67	25	7	26
CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT				
Citizen participation in community decisions	56	30	14	17
Willingness of people to work for good of community	58	31	11	20
Community spirit and pride	64	28	8	31
EMPLOYMENT				
Employment opportunities	55	30	15	18
Unemployment	61	26	12	23
Industrial development	64	25	11	35
COMMUNITY SERVICES				
Long range community planning	54	31	16	15
Adequacy of water and sewage facilities	59	28	12	24
Garbage collection and disposal	63	26	12	27
Adequacy of fire protection	70	25	6	37
CULTURE SERVICES				
Cultural opportunities (drama, music and art)	62	24	14	29
Adequacy of libraries and museums	66	24	10	33
CHURCH AND YOUTH SERVICES				
Availability of youth organizations (scouts, 4-H, Little league)	77	18	5	38
Availability of churches	92	7	1	39
OTHER ITEMS				
Cost of living	15	31	55	1
Availability of adequate housing	58	28	14	19
Adequacy of tourist facilities	64	21	14	32

Several items did not conveniently fit into any of the community dimensions and were included last in the table. It should be noted that the "cost of living" is the number one community problem. But the item is so broad that it really only identifies an area of concern rather than a specific community problem. Another way to look at community problems is to rank the items themselves independent of the dimensions. The 9 most serious community problems include:

1. Cost of living
2. Use of illegal drugs
3. Recreation and entertainment facilities for those over 60
4. Adequacy of medical facilities and staff
5. Recreation and entertainment facilities for those 21 to 60
6. Assistance to the old
7. Recreation and entertainment facilities for those under 21
8. Availability of special education for the retarded and handicapped
9. Condition of the streets and roads

Over one-half of the respondents indicated that these 9 items were a moderate or serious problem in their community.

The 5 least serious problems in communities across the State include:

1. Availability of churches
2. Availability of youth organizations
3. Adequacy of fire protection
4. Air pollution
5. Adequacy of libraries and museums

RURAL-URBAN PROBLEMS

Often the variety of services and the quality of life are affected by the number of people available to provide revenue for the community. Therefore this study assessed whether certain community problems were more serious or less serious in rural or urban parts of North Carolina. Two perspectives were utilized for this purpose. First, the study determined whether people in sparsely populated areas viewed their problems differently than people in heavily populated areas. Second, the study looked at peoples perception of community problems in relation to the size of community in or near which they reside. Utilizing these two perspectives, most community leaders and planners can assess where their community or county fits into this schema.

In order to determine where a given county fits into the analysis, the following is a list of counties according to population density:

COUNTIES WITH LESS THAN 50 PEOPLE/SQUARE MILE
Alleghany, Anson, Ashe, Beaufort, Bertie, Bladen, Brunswick, Camden, Caswell, Chatham, Cherokee, Clay, Columbus, Currituck, Dare, Duplin, Gates, Graham, Hoke, Hyde, Jackson, Jones, Macon, Madison, Montgomery, Northampton, Pamlico, Pender, Perquimans, Polk, Sampson, Swain, Tyrrell, Warren, Washington, Yancey.

COUNTIES WITH 50 TO 99 PEOPLE/SQUARE MILE
Alexander, Avery, Carteret, Chowan, Craven, Davie, Franklin, Granville, Greene, Halifax, Harnett, Haywood, Hertford, Johnston, McDowell, Martin, Mitchell, Moore, Person, Randolph, Richmond, Robeson, Rutherford, Scotland, Stokes, Surry, Transylvania, Union, Watauga, Wilkes, Wilson, Yadkin.

COUNTIES WITH 100 to 249 PEOPLE/SQUARE MILE
Alamance, Buncombe, Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Catawba, Cleveland, Davidson, Edgecombe, Henderson, Iredell, Lee, Lenoir, Lincoln, Nash, Onslow, Orange, Pasquotank, Pitt, Rockingham, Rowan, Stanly, Vance, Wayne.

COUNTIES WITH 250 to 499 PEOPLE/SQUARE MILE
Cumberland, Durham, Gaston, Guilford, New Hanover, Wake.

COUNTIES WITH 500 OR MORE PEOPLE/SQUARE MILE
Forsyth, Mecklenburg.

Table 2: Percent who perceive the following as moderate or serious community problems according to the population density of their county.

Community Dimension items	POPULATION DENSITY OF COUNTY					
	Less 50 people/ sq. mile (347)	50-99 people/ sq. mile (689)	100-249 people/ sq. mile (966)	250-499 people/ sq. mile (654)	500+ people/ sq. mile (355)	Percent Variation
RECREATION						
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those over 60.....	70%	69%	62%	60%	53%	-17
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those 21 to 60.....	68	66	56	54	42	-24
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those under 21.....	60	62	52	47	42	-19
HEALTH						
Adequacy of medical facilities & staff.....	71	69	53	49	46	-25
Mental health service.....	54	55	42	44	48	-13
TRANSPORTATION						
Condition of streets and roads.....	63	54	50	45	50	-18
Adequacy of transportation system.....	44	44	44	48	55	+11
SOCIAL SERVICES						
Assistance to the old.....	62	62	53	51	49	-13
Availability of youth counseling services..	52	53	48	43	34	-19
Assistance to the poor.....	48	50	40	44	42	-10
Availability of child care centers.....	56	52	42	38	30	-26
SOCIAL CONTROLS						
Use of illegal drugs.....	50	54	64	71	77	+27
Adequacy of law enforcement.....	36	41	38	41	48	+12
Race relations in community.....	27	28	33	39	54	+27
Protection of individual freedom & privacy.	32	31	28	32	33	*
EDUCATION						
Availability of special education for retarded and handicapped.....	65	61	51	48	54	-17
Adequacy of elementary and high schools....	54	57	42	44	49	*
Availability of kindergarten program.....	45	42	39	40	38	- 7
Availability of vocational training in high schools.....	45	39	35	33	39	*
Adult education program.....	43	36	34	34	27	-16

Table 2: (continued)

Community Dimension item	Less 50 people/ sq. mile (347)	50-99 people/ sq. mile (689)	100-249 people/ sq. mile (966)	250-499 people/ sq. mile (654)	500+ people/ sq. mile (355)	Percent Variation
POLLUTION						
Water pollution	42%	35%	43%	47%	55%	+20
Air pollution	28	26	31	36	51	+25
CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT						
Citizen participation in community decisions	48	45	41	44	49	*
Willingness of people to work for good of community	47	43	38	44	47	*
Community spirit and pride	40	36	32	37	38	*
EMPLOYMENT						
Employment opportunities	64	51	41	37	36	-28
Unemployment	54	44	36	32	33	-22
Industrial development	60	42	33	25	22	-38
COMMUNITY SERVICES						
Long range community planning	53	46	42	47	52	*
Adequacy of water & sewage facilities	49	41	40	40	37	-12
Garbage collection and disposal	49	39	34	34	36	-15
Adequacy of fire protection	47	35	28	24	20	-27
CULTURE SERVICES						
Cultural opportunities (drama, music, art)	53	42	46	34	24	-29
Adequacy of libraries and museums	44	33	36	31	28	-16
CHURCH AND YOUTH SERVICES						
Availability of youth organizations (scouts, 4-H, little league)	33	28	20	22	14	-19
Availability of churches	11	10	8	6	5	- 6
OTHER ITEMS						
Cost of living	84	85	83	87	90	+ 7
Availability of adequate housing	51	44	42	40	29	-22
Adequacy of tourist facilities	42	39	34	34	28	-14

*This indicates that percent variation between the categories is less than 5 percent or that no apparent trend is observable. A (+) indicates of greater concern to urban areas and a (-) indicates of greater concern to rural areas.

When studying peoples perception of problems in their communities, one can see that people in more rural areas seem to perceive more problems as serious than do people in more urban areas (see Table 2). Four community dimensions were of greater concern to rural residents (this is indicated by the minus sign in the percent variation column). These include Employment, Recreation, Health, and Social Services. The greatest variation appeared in the Employment dimension. While 64 percent of the respondents in sparsely populated (rural) areas perceived "employment opportunities" as a moderate or serious problem only 36 percent of respondents in heavily populated (urban) areas perceived this as a problem. Likewise while 60 percent of residents in sparsely populated areas perceive "industrial development" as a moderate or serious community problem, only 22 percent of the respondents in urban areas felt that this was a moderate or serious community problem.

People in heavily populated areas were more concerned with Social Control issues and with Pollution issues. For example, 77 percent of the respondents living in heavily populated areas (like Mecklenburg and Forsyth counties) perceived the use of illegal drugs as a moderate or serious community problem while 50 percent of the respondents in sparsely populated areas (such as Ashe or Clay county) perceived this as a moderate or serious community problem. Likewise 51 percent of the people in urban areas were concerned about air pollution while only 26 to 28 percent were concerned in more rural areas. Many other items manifest rural-urban differences. For example, the "adequacy of fire protection" and "cultural opportunities" were considered as much more serious in rural counties than in urban counties. It is suggested that a person spend some time with Table 2 to see the full implication of the many comparisons.

FARM-CITY PROBLEMS

When community problems were viewed according to the size of community in or near which people live a similar picture emerged. One immediate difference showed that people who live on farms did not perceive various problems as serious as did the people in small towns. The greatest differences were between larger cities and smaller towns with those living on farms falling somewhere in the middle (see Table 3, pages 14-15).

Again, people living in smaller towns were more concerned than people in larger cities about Employment, Recreation, Health, Social Services, Cultural Services, and Church and Youth Services. People in larger cities were more concerned than people in smaller towns about issues concerning Social Control and Pollution. It was interesting to note that in both Table 2 and 3, people in rural areas were more concerned with the "condition of streets and roads" while people in urban areas were more concerned with the "adequacy of the transportation systems."

In summary, two community dimensions clearly were considered more serious by people in urban areas than by people in more rural areas. These included the issues focusing on Social Control and Pollution. Six community dimensions were of greater concern to rural residents. These include Employment, Recreation, Health, Social Services, Cultural Services, and Church and Youth Services.

The items which differed the most between rural and urban areas include:

1. Use of illegal drugs
2. Adequacy of medical facilities and staff
3. Air pollution
4. Adequacy of fire protection

Table 3: Percent who perceive the following as a moderate or serious community problem according to the size of community.

Community Dimension items	Farm (455)	Town less than 10,000 (1012)	City 10,000-50,000 (722)	Larger City 50,000+ (759)	Percent Variation
RECREATION					
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those over 60....	58%	69%	63%	58%	-11
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those 21 to 60...	54	66	56	49	-15
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those under 21...	55	61	52	44	-17
HEALTH					
Adequacy of medical facilities and staff.....	64	66	52	39	-25
Mental health services.....	49	52	43	45	- 9
TRANSPORTATION					
Condition of streets and roads...	54	55	49	47	- 7
Adequacy of transportation system.....	34	48	49	50	+16
SOCIAL SERVICES					
Assistance to the old.....	56	58	55	51	- 7
Availability of youth counseling services.....	50	54	47	39	-13
Assistance to the poor.....	43	47	41	45	*
Availability of child care centers.....	47	52	41	34	-18
SOCIAL CONTROLS					
Use of illegal drugs.....	45	57	69	77	+32
Adequacy of law enforcement.....	43	40	39	45	*
Race relations in community.....	27	26	38	48	+21
Protection of individual freedom and privacy.....	32	30	28	33	*
EDUCATION					
Availability of special education for retarded and handicapped....	56	60	50	52	-10
Adequacy of elementary and high schools.....	45	47	43	48	*
Availability of kindergarten program.....	39	44	37	41	*
Availability of vocational training in high schools.....	37	40	35	36	*
Adult education program.....	40	41	31	31	-10

Table 3: (continued)

Community Dimension items	Farm (455)	Town less than 10,000 (1012)	City 10,000-50,000 (722)	Larger City 50,000+ (759)	Percent Variation
POLLUTION					
Water pollution	37%	37%	45%	54%	+17
Air pollution	23	26	35	45	+23
CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT					
Citizen participation in community decisions	41	43	46	47	+ 6
Willingness of people to work for good of community	38	42	42	46	+ 8
Community spirit and pride	35	33	37	38	+ 5
EMPLOYMENT					
Employment opportunities	45	51	44	36	-15
Unemployment	39	42	39	33	- 9
Industrial development	40	44	37	23	-21
COMMUNITY SERVICES					
Long range community planning	43	47	46	49	+ 6
Adequacy of water and sewage facilities	35	46	38	40	*
Garbage collection and disposal	43	39	35	33	-10
Adequacy of fire protection	44	33	25	21	-23
CULTURE SERVICES					
Cultural opportunities (drama, music and art)	38	44	37	29	-15
Adequacy of libraries and museums	38	38	33	29	-19
CHURCH AND YOUTH SERVICES					
Availability of youth organizations (scouts,4-H, little league)	30	27	18	18	-12
Availability of churches	14	8	6	5	- 9
OTHER ITEMS					
Cost of living	84	84	84	90	+ 6
Availability of adequate housing	37	48	46	33	*
Adequacy of tourist facilities	37	43	33	27	-16

*This indicates that percent variation between the categories is less than 5 percent or that no apparent trend is observable. A (+) indicates of greater concern to urban areas and a (-) indicates of greater concern to rural areas.

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS[2]

One might logically wonder whether the problems which have been identified as more serious for either rural or urban communities were really a result of population size and density or due to economic differences.

In order to assess how people in various income levels perceive the seriousness of community problems, the sample was divided into three categories. This will provide some indication of peoples perception of problems based on their economic situation. Table 4 indicates that people of lower family income perceived the issues concerning Employment, Health, and Social Services as more serious community problems than do people of more advantaged economic situations. In fact, if there existed any differences in the perception of the relative seriousness for various community problems, it was most likely that poorer people saw many more items as a serious problem. Those of higher income only considered three problems as more serious than did those of lower family income. The items included "use of illegal drugs," "long range community planning," and "adequacy of elementary and high school."

The two major concerns of urban areas (Pollution and Social Control) did not show any clear differences according to income level. However, many of the community dimensions which were of concern to people in more rural areas were also of more concern to those of lower income. Both those in rural areas and those of lower income were more concerned about Employment, Health, Social Services, and Church and Youth Services. Two community

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[2]Comparisons were also made according to age and race. Age differences were slight. Racial differences were similar to those for different levels of income. Thus, the information was omitted. However, this data is available upon request from the author.

Table 4: Percent who perceive the following as moderate or serious community problems according to income level.

Community Dimension items	Family Income: Less than $6,000 (664)	6,000 to $14,999 (1500)	$15,000+ (700)	Percent Variation
RECREATION				
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those over 60.....	62%	65%	61%	*
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those 21 to 60....	58	59	54	*
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those under 21....	55	55	50	*
HEALTH				
Adequacy of medical facilities and staff.....	64	57	50	-14
Mental health services.....	57	46	41	-16
TRANSPORTATION				
Condition of streets and roads....	58	51	46	-12
Adequacy of transportation system.	49	44	50	*
SOCIAL SERVICES				
Assistance to the old.....	63	56	48	-15
Availability of youth counseling services.....	52	48	45	- 7
Assistance to the poor.....	57	42	35	-22
Availability of child care centers.....	49	44	39	-10
SOCIAL CONTROLS				
Use of illegal drugs.....	56	64	70	+14
Adequacy of law enforcement.....	46	40	39	- 7
Race relations in community.....	36	33	37	*
Protection of individual freedom and privacy.....	41	29	27	-14
EDUCATION				
Availability of special education for retarded and handicapped.....	56	56	52	*
Adequacy of elementary and high schools.....	43	44	50	+ 7
Availability of kindergarten program.....	43	41	39	*
Availability of vocational training in high schools.....	43	36	34	- 9
Adult education program.....	43	37	26	-17

Table 4: (continued)

Community Dimension items	Family Income: Less than $6,000 (664)	6,000 to $14,999 (1500)	$15,000+ (700)	Percent Variation
POLLUTION				
Water pollution	44%	42%	48%	*
Air pollution	37	31	33	*
CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT				
Citizen participation in community decisions	46	44	43	*
Willingness of people to work for good of community	44	42	41	*
Community spirit and pride	40	35	32	- 8
EMPLOYMENT				
Employment opportunities	60	42	34	-26
Unemployment	55	37	27	-28
Industrial development	44	35	28	-16
COMMUNITY SERVICES				
Long range community planning	43	46	54	+11
Adequacy of water and sewage facilities	44	39	42	*
Garbage collection and disposal	46	36	32	-14
Adequacy of fire protection	43	28	20	-23
CULTURE SERVICES				
Cultural opportunities (drama music and art)	41	37	37	*
Adequacy of libraries and museums	37	34	32	*
CHURCH AND YOUTH SERVICES				
Availability of youth organizations (scouts, 4-H, little league)	36	21	15	-21
Availability of churches	19	9	4	-15
OTHER ITEMS				
Cost of living	89	85	82	- 7
Availability of adequate housing	50	40	36	-14
Adequacy of tourist facilities	41	36	30	-11

*This indicates that percent variation between the categories is less than 5 percent or that no apparent trend is observable. A (+) indicates of greater concern to those of higher income and a (-) indicates of greater concern to those of lower income.

dimensions which were of major concern to rural residents (Recreation and Cultural Services) did not seem to vary according to different levels of income. After analysis of the perception of community problems according to different levels of family income it is apparent that certain problems tend to be more intense in urban areas and certain problems appear more intense in rural areas irrespective of the economic condition of the people. Items focusing on Social Control and Pollution appear to be more of an urban problem than a rural problem. Items focusing on Recreation and Culture appear to be more of a rural problem than an urban problem.

SUMMARY

The "cost of living" and the "use of illegal drugs" were considered the two most serious problems in communities across North Carolina. Other major problems include items focusing on Recreation, Health and Transportation. However, there were some clear trends which demonstrate that certain community problems become more intense as the population increases or decreases.

The major problems which increase the most in intensity as the size of the population increases include:

MODERATE OR SERIOUS COMMUNITY PROBLEM
(Table 3)

	FARM	CITY
Use of illegal drugs	45%	77%
Water pollution	37%	54%
Adequacy of transportation system	34%	50%
Race relations in community	27%	48%
Air pollution	23%	45%

Some of the major problems which greatly increase as the population becomes more rural include:

MODERATE OR SERIOUS COMMUNITY PROBLEM
(Table 2)

	RURAL	URBAN
Adequacy of medical facilities and staff	71%	46%
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those over 60	70%	53%
Recreation and entertainment facilities for those 21 to 60	68%	42%
Availability of special education for retarded and handicapped	65%	48%
Employment opportunities	64%	36%
Industrial development	60%	22%

Some problems which vary considerably according to different levels of family income include:

MODERATE OR SERIOUS COMMUNITY PROBLEM
(Table 4)

	LOW INCOME	HIGH INCOME
Employment opportunities	60%	34%
Assistance to the poor	57%	35%
Unemployment	55%	27%
Adequacy of fire protection	43%	20%
Availability of youth organizations	36%	15%

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Today in this complex society, people are making more and more demands upon their communities for various services and facilities. There exists so many competing needs that it is often difficult for a leader to know where to begin. This report presents some documented public input for setting priorities. Such information cannot provide all the answers but can help to stimulate thought and discussion for future planning.

What can be done with this information? It can be used by local, county, and regional groups as baseline information for discussing local, regional and State problems. Various clubs and organizations can look to this information for ideas for special projects and undertakings. Such information can provide various State and local agencies with an evaluation of peoples needs. Likewise businesses can see such information as feedback on certain needs which they might provide to communities and individuals.

Several implications can be drawn from the information presented in this report. Leaders, planners and policy makers in both rural and urban areas need to consider the peoples' high concern for the cost of living, the use of illegal drugs, recreational and entertainment facilities, along with items focusing on health and transportation. There is a clear indication that the people all across North Carolina need help in these areas. Urban leaders and planners should be particularly concerned about drugs, pollution, the transportation system, and race relations. While rural leaders and planners should be particularly concerned with medical facilities, recreation,

special education, employment, and industrial development. Likewise, both rural and urban leaders and planners need to be aware of the particular problems of low income groups. This information and the implications of such information will compliment other economic, environmental, and demographic information for understanding the problems in communities across North Carolina.

This report confirms and documents a lot of what may be already known; yet it goes beyond that in presenting a broad comparative picture of problems as the people see them. The study also points out many problems which in the past may have been overlooked. It is relatively easy to highlight the problems; solutions come more slowly. But let this be a point of departure for possible solutions.